THE

N.Z. HONEYBEE

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF BEEKEEPERS

EDITOR-MANAGER . . . P. A. HILLARY

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News of General Interest

Retailing Comb Honey

Remits submitted to the June Conference at Timaru by the West Otago and Gore branches advocated the establishment of a grading standard for section comb honey.

Mr Heron said that a good deal of section honey was being put on the market by beginners and was not properly wrapped. There should not be any open honey on the market.

Mr Swanson stated that he had seen some particularly bad sections in different stores, which ought not to be allowed under the Pure Foods Act. He thought it was time that the Association gave consideration to the marketing of comb honey.

Mr Bray said that there would be difficulty in grading the honey which was produced in small quantities from scattered places, the handling not being in the interests of the product and reducing the profit. The Conference should ask that comb honey be brought under the net weight regulations, which would have a similar effect to that sought by the remit. The consumer also could be protected by the wrapping of all sections.

Mr Earp said that grading was a difficult matter, as most comb honey was produced by amateurs over a wide area, and it would be too costly to send inspectors out to do the grading. Mr Bray's suggestion was a good one.

The following resolution was agreed to: "That the Health Department be asked to bring section honey under the net weight regulations so that each section be marked with the minimum weight in ounces; and also insist that all section honey displayed for sale be displayed in wrappers."

Manawatu Branch

The Manawatu Branch of the N.B.A. met at Massey College on July 11th, Mr J. F. Lewin (president) in the chair.

The N.B.A. vice-president, Mr E. A. Field, gave an address on Conference, stating that the scheme for the internal marketing of honey was unanimously approved and was the scheme the beekeepers had been wanting for years. Answering questions, the speaker said that 500 tons of honey had been exported this season. A new system of grading honey would be introduced next season and would improve the position of the producer and the market.

Mr Dodson, Apiary Instructor, gave an address on the present grading system.

A honey competition was then held, with Messrs Field and Dodson as judges. Mr F. J. Lewin was the winner, with Messrs Sapwell, Hobbs and Dale tieing for second place. Mr Lewin attributed his success in part to using a lady's new silk stocking as the fifth and final strainer of the honey.

"THE N.Z. HONEYBEE is a valuable journal for beekeepers, and I enclose 3/6 sub."—T.B., Brydone.

Editorial Comment

Forging Ahead

We wish to express our appreciation to the hundreds of beekeepers who have so spontaneously supported this Journal by sending in their subscriptions. The list has grown to such proportions that we are compelled to instal a special card index system to keep the list up-to-date and enable efficient checking and reference. This is very encouraging, and emphasises the gratification of beekeepers at the issue of a journal devoted entirely to the interests of beekeepers in New Zealand. It also stimulates us to plan for the progress and expansion of the Journal.

The N.Z. Honeybee" had its first birthday on July 30th. This issue is the first number of its second year of publication. We wish to express thanks for the many good wishes and congratulatory messages of readers all over the Dominion.

The policy of the Journal will be to continue giving its very best service to the industry, and to develop its educational and informative functions. No sides will be taken in any dispute, and contributions of destructive, personal articles will not be accepted. In one case, an attempt to force such an article on us was made by insisting on its insertion as a paid advertisement. It failed, of course.

We wish to also thank our many contributors for their most helpful and valuable articles and news items. These have materially contributed towards the success of the Journal.

Harmony in the Industry

During the recent change-over from a N.Z. Honey Export Control Board with full powers, to a N.Z. Honey Board shorn of its export and its control powers, a certain amount of disturbance was unavoidable, including the resignation of the personnel of the Honey Export Control Board en bloc. The marketing powers of the export board were taken over by the Marketing Department, which also had considerable extended authority under the Primary Products Marketing Act.

A new board (termed the N.Z. Honey Board) was appointed from the directorate of N.Z. Honey Ltd. (in liquidation), a certain amount of opposition to the appointment of the company chairman as Chairman of the new Honey Board being manifested.

The internal Marketing Division framed a new honey marketing policy, which later was implemented and improved, and which then secured the overwhelming support of the industry, with unanimous resolutions of approval at meetings of members of the National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z.

The Honey Board," and especially its Chairman, has done useful work since its appointment in March last, and can undoubtedly give further good service to the industry. We would appeal to honey producers to rally unanimously to the support of their two marketing organisations—the Internal Marketing Division and the Honey Board, and give them loyal and steadfast backing. Both organisations have only one object in mind—to do their very best for the honey producers, and to secure for them a reasonable return for their labours, with security and comfort.

All profits from the sale of honey exported, and of that sold locally by the Department, are paid directly to the producers, and do not find their way into the coffers of speculators and dealers. This is a principle that the industry has long fought to have introduced into the marketing of honey. They should hold fast to this great concession with all their might; and the only way to do this is to give unswerving loyalty to those in authority, with implicit confidence in their policy. We earnestly suggest that any producers with personal grievances should, for the good of the industry as a whole, determine to set aside that aspect of the matter, and

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join in unanimous support of the personnel of the present marketing authorities.

The marketing of New Zealand honey has reached a standard of efficiency and soundness of method on the joint export of local markets never before possible. The quality packs of the Department are commanding wide favour from consumers locally, and we predict great strides in the development of the overseas market when bulk is exported in several high-class standard grades during the coming season.

The future holds high promise to producers, and the industry bids fair to progress rapidly and to grow in service to the Dominion as a whole.

Loyalty and Harmony!

Duty on Sugar

Remits urging the removal of duty on sugar used for feeding bees were submitted by the South Auckland, the Manawatu, and by the Taranaki branches at the Timaru Conference.

Mr Bates (Taranaki) said that they had fought for the removal of this injustice for many years and the Government had persistently changed their ground when the question cropped up. Beekeepers claimed that there would be no abuse of the concession. There were substances that could be added to sugar to render it unfit for human use, but not to bees. He understood that the Department had made some inquiries about this substance and in view of that he thought that the Government could be approached confidently for a remission of the duty.

Mr Earp stated that there was a substance that had come under the notice of the Department of which he was making the fullest inquries. It was made in Germany but the Department's informant in England stated that the Germans raise certain objections to the substance being offered for sale outside Germany. The matter was still under consideration by the Government.

Mr Bray (Christchurch) said that he was opposed to the remit and had been against it for years. His reason was that in the ranks of the beekeeping industry there were beekeepers who were producing honey that was not a good marketable commodity in that the flavour was too strong for the public, but not too strong for the bees. There were districts where the Department prohibited the keeping of bees because the honey of those districts was suspect. There were beekeepers who could provide food for bees, and the best thing to feed to bees was honey. In Canterbury they wintered their bees on the best of honey, and it was a good proposition to use the honey he referred to which came chiefly, he understood, from the Bay of Plenty where there was no disease and never had been any. He suggested that beekeepers should try that honey; even some of the producers could be their own customers. Another reason for his opposition was that it gave ground for the public to say that they fed bees on sugar to get honey, whereas beekeepers knew that it was to produce brood and not honey. There was a possibility of the public taking them up wrongly on that question. Consequently it was bad policy to press for the removal of the duty, and he seriously suggested that they should not pass the remit.

Mr Kirker (Taranaki) said the amount of tax paid by a rich man on sugar he ate was not much more than that paid by the poor man, but when sugar was used for bee feed the taxation became unjust. If producers had to sell honey to other producers for bee feed the price they got would not provide them a living.

Mr Bates said that Mr Bray's idea was hopelessly impracticable; he had given it a trial and knew that it was not a practicable proposition. No new matter had appeared to alter the past decision to press for removal of the duty.

The remit was agreed to.

Apiary Sites

By W. J. FIX

Choosing Sites

During the past few years there has been an unprecedented demand for apiary sites, far greater, in fact, than at any previous time in the history of the industry. The old-time prejudice does not exist amongst the farming community to-day, and beekeepers frequently have more locations available than they can reasonably operate. Unfortunately, districts literally white with clover are not always ideal honey-producing centres, and I am afraid that we are all misled at times by this type of country. On general appearance it may be excellent, but if we go further and take into consideration other factors such as rainfall, general weather conditions, and the nature of the soil, it will often be found that the elements except, perhaps, during abnormal seasons, are totally unfavourable.

The heavy type of country (let us call it cattle country) has failed to give results in the Canterbury province during the past few years. This may appear to be a rather sweeping statement, but a correct one, and as it is only reasonable to anticipate that the same climatic conditions will obtain in the future as in the past we must look to the light soil for our honey. The cash value of the crop gives the true measure of success, so if producers are fortunate in their selection of location, expert knowledge will prove of little value and the season's work of little profit.

Light Country Preferable

To establish in such positions that both light and heavy country is within flight range is usually considered desirable, and there is certainly a little in favour of such a policy as provision is thereby made for wet and dry seasons. According to records, however, seven seasons out of the last ten have been definitely favourable for light soil. This must bring about a change of ideas, but the process is not a very rapid one. Areas of country previously considered unsuitable are now producing good crops of first quality honey.

The value of irrigation must not be lost sight of, as it will make available country that at the present time is practically useless except during wet seasons. Two small areas have already been completed in Canterbury, but in view of the high summer rainfall during the past two years it has not been possible to arrive at the value of the project—that is, of course, from the apiarists' point of view. We have discovered, however, that light soil with occasional summer rain gives the honey crop, so if the necessary moisture can be supplied by irrigation the country should be worth while.

Good Production Areas

Some of the finest producing areas in the province lie between Christchurch and Timaru, but on appearance these are far from attractive as the light nature of the soil gives one the idea that the clover would burn off during the early part of the season. This is correct to a degree, but at the same time the heaviest crops in the province have been taken on this class of country and the average per colony over five years far exceeds that produced on the heavier lands. I am not advocating overstocking, as this country mentioned is now well covered, but I am convinced that if producers will study the conditions in their own districts and ascertain the effects of temperature and rainfall on the various types of soil, many changes in location will result. The position no doubt requires a far closer study in the South Island than in the North, as we really rely on ground flora, consequently good flying weather is not all that is necessary to bring about a honey flow, and an abundance of clover over a prolonged period does not necessarily mean heavy crops. We must therefore satisfy ourselves that the conditions are such that the clover will yield nectar freely.

(To be continued)

Beekeeping Reminiscences—I.

Banquet at Timaru

The twenty-fifth annivesary of the Nationai Beekeepers Association of N.Z. was celebrated in Timaru in June last at a banquet, the president, Mr L. F. Robins, presiding.

The President described the first meeting of beekeepers he had attended at the Athenaeum, Oamaru, Mr Earp also being present. There was no "National" then. Later, conferences were held in Wellington, Messrs James Allen (Southland), Dick Bricknell (Dunedin),T. J. Mannex and Penn being prominent.

Mr W. B. Bray said that he had been connected with the Association off and on—more often off—(laughter) since its formation. Between 1910 and 1913 the National went to sleep. Mr Isaac Hopkins, he could tell them, was never at the Association's conferences except once. He stood off in the background and made shots for the lot of them to fire and they had been firing them ever since. He was their chief man in those days when they had a number of associations all over the place. Most of their members knew little about bees or about the Association. They had one shot at forming the National in 1910 and another in 1913. They had had some hectic times and some dull times. He remembered one session that ended in uproar. The chairman was trying to put a resolution—it was his (the speaker's) as it happened—and the secretary got it down as carried. (Laughter.) It was submitted with other resolutions to the Government and it was the only one that the Government granted. Things were often run under "Rafferty rules"—everyone speaking at once, and a fellow could speak as often as he could. (Laughter.) There had been big changes in their time, and there would be bigger in the times to come. The Association would have a good part to play in the future. (Applause.)

"Grand Old Man"

Mr Bates said the South Taranaki Association was formed in 1908, and in its second year it had 53 members; the number had dropped since then. In the early times there were numbers of small beekeepers, but only a few commercial men. Looking through the old minute books a number of well known names cropped up. Mr Hopkins was a grand old man and always was mentioned when tributes were being paid to the industry. He owed to Mr Hopkins whatever little advance he had made. As a youth working on his father's farm he had gone to Palmerston North on the occasion of the Winter Show. Mr Hopkins had addressed a meeting and as a result he (the speaker) had made a start and had been able to carry on. He had met Mr Hopkins on many occasions and had spent profitable times in his company. In the early days he remembered Mr Bray at the Hawera Show demonstrating the transference of bees. Another pioneer was the late Dick Brickell Few men had contributed so much to the success of the industry as that gentleman. He (the speaker) had run into him at the Palmerston North Show, where he demonstrated modern methods of extracting. Mr Gibb was another prominent man, particularly in lecturing and instructing. He supposed that the man who had contributed most to the advance of the industry was Mr Lenz, senior, who had given a practical demonstration of how commercial beekeeping should be carried on. The Association had gone out altogether for six years and did not function, but after the Great War it started to function again. He thought that the Poverty Bay Association was the oldest branch, but unfortunately it had broken adrift from the Association. Some of his hearers might remember Mr Adams who had a wooden leg and was quite a character. Amongst those connec-

ted with their Association were Mr H. W. Gilling who was instrumental in getting co-operative marketing going and Mr H. R. Penny.

Bicycle for Instructor

Mr Griffin, of the Southland branch, made the proud claim that it was the oldest branch in the Dominion. He had found the minute book giving the date, January 21st, 1906. Mr Isaac Hopkins was present. There were still original members of the branch alive in Messrs Doutt and Cole. The minute book contained many familiar names, such as Mr James Allen and Mr Robert Gibb. As an instance of the wonderful spirit of the pioneers of those days he mentioned Mr May, of Island Block, who was working on a gold dredge in Central Otago. He used to cycle 12 miles to a railway station; from there he went to Gore where he stayed the night. In the morning he got the train to Wyndham and then started to go to the field day. At the end of the day, the procedure was reversed. It took him three days and he lost 9s a day in pay and had to pay his expenses. That was a very wonderful spirit. (Applause.) Mr Earp was mentioned in the very early days of the Southland branch, and the branch was successful in getting the Government to provide him with a bicycle. (Laughter.) In 1908 they were successful in getting an inspector sent to the South Island; before that, apparently, the South Island was not inspected at all. He believed that Mr Earp was the man sent to the South Island. He sincerely hoped, and they all hoped, that this jubilee year would mark the beginning of a new era for them, and that it would not be any longer possible for people not dependent on the industry for a living to force them down to a ridiculous level of livelihood. (Applause.)

Mr Watson said that he would like to give them a brief outline of the history of one of the most important branches—the South Canterbury branch. He thought it started in Geraldine about 1908. In those days he was an amateur. They had a field day at his apiary at which Mr Bowman was present, and as a result it was decided to form a branch. Mr Grayson was the first President. Mr Lang was secretary. Members of the branch had had some fine evenings and some fine outings. They carried on till 1910. His first venture in sending honey abroad consisted of 10 tons, at an advance of 3¼d a lb; but when he got his account he found that he had to refund ¼d a lb. (Laughter.) A notable incident was when one beekeeper managed to buy a lot of old stuff and mixed it, and it was graded and got high marks. Some of the beekeepers made a song about this and during the dinner time the marks were reduced to 70. In 1914-15 they carried on with small meetings. Three of their members volunteered for the war—Messrs Lang, Gordon Edwards and Dick Smith. From that time onward the branch was practically dormant and almost petered out. In 1926 they joined up with the National and were affiliated with the Waimate branch; from that time onward their meetings were held in Temuka. In the interval they had some fairly hard times. On many occasions three of them held their meetings in a motor car at Temuka; the same process was followed when meetings were held in Geraldine. They carried on till the Timaru branch, a very effective one, was formed.

Feeding for Stores

The most beneficial proportions of sugar and water for making sugar syrup for bee feed are one 70lb bag of A1 sugar dissolved in 5½ gallons of hot water.—Mrs A. D. Betts, Editor Bee World.

"THANKS for copy of N.Z., Honeybee, subscription enclosed. It is to the interest of all beekeepers to support the Journal, not only with their cash, but with occasional news items as well."—H.B., Blenheim.

Work for the Month

By J. Unsworth.

Spring Management

Spring management of bees commences in New Zealand about the end of August, when there is an appreciable increase in the warmth of the sun. Bees will have awakened from their more or less dormant winter condition, and will be bringing in small quantities of pollen and nectar from early-blossoming plants, principally fruit trees, tea-tree or native shrubs.

The best time of the day to make an examination is between ten a.m. and noon. If the day is bright and sunny, bees will be bringing in pollen, as evidenced by the pellets of various hues attached to their hind legs.

The smoker should be lighted with material such as grain sacking that has been exposed to the weather for several months and is perfectly dry. With the smoker going well the first hive is approached, and clean bottom board and super placed side by side by the hive.

After several good puffs at the entrance followed by a wait of 30 seconds, the whole hive is lifted on to the clean bottom-board. The old bottom-board is cleaned and replaced. Another gentle puff of smoke is given and the cover removed. The mat is gently raised at the corner and a puff given, the mat being gently lifted with puffs of smoke softly flowing over the frames—not down between.

With a hive tool gently prise the second frame at litter end so as to break the bee glue or propolis that sticks the frames together. Remove this frame, placing it in the empty super provided alongside beforehand.

Examine for Stores

Examine each frame individually and replace. A careful note must be made of the approximate amount of honey each colony has at this period—a full depth Langstroth frame holds approximately 5lbs of honey (patches must be estimated in terms of frames of honey). Hives should never have less than 12lbs of honey; if they do, brood-rearing will be curtailed and the colony will not gather the crop of honey that it would with ample stores.

Note the amount of brood. A normal colony should now have brood in 3 or 4 frames, some ready to emerge. Write these details on a piece of card and leave on top of mat or tacked to inside of lid. Don't be any longer than necessary over the examination, as there is not much warmth yet and if the brood is chilled it dies.

Don't waste time looking for the queen. If eggs or young brood are in the hive, she is there. If there is no brood, note the fact; the queen has not necessarily died. She may be old or a shortage of honey has prevented laying.

If by mid-September there are no eggs, brood or queen, unite the colony with a queen-right one by simply removing the cover and mat of a strong colony, putting a sheet of newspaper (with a few nail holes punched through) over it, then placing the queenless hive on top with its mat and cover on. In a few days the bees should have united peacefully.

Palmerston North

An interesting address was given last month at Palmerston North by Mr H. F. Dodson, apiary instructor, to a meeting of beekeepers. He advised all beginners to get in touch with the local branch of the N.B. Assn., and urged all beginners to co-operate in the selling price of honey. The speaker explained the need for packing a high-quality article.

The lecture was illustrated with numerous lantern slides, dealing with the subject from the laying of the eggs by the queen to the finished pack.

Mr Dodson was warmly thanked.

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